

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 NASSAU 00998 01 OF 02 241730Z

44

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 PM-03 DODE-00 L-02

EUR-10 CG-00 TRSE-00 DEAE-00 SNM-02 SCS-01 SCA-01

SY-02 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 VO-01 RSR-01 IO-03

COA-01 H-01 /074 W

----- 041383

R 241439Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4437

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 NASSAU 998

LIMDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI PINS BF US

SUBJ: SECURITY SURVEY TEAM

REFS: (A) STATE 133669; (B) STATE 135246; (C) NASSAU 976

BEGIN SUMMARY: THIS CABLE SETS OUT THE EMBASSY'S VIEWS ON
BAHAMIAN SECURITY INTERESTS AND NOTES CERTAIN SENSITIVITIES
WHICH SHOULD BE KEPT IN MIND AS THE SECURITY SURVEY PROCEEDS.
END SUMMARY.

1. BAHAMIAN SECURITY INTERESTS

A. AS WE HAVE POINTED OUT IN PREVIOUS REPORTING, WE HAVE
BEEN DEALING IN THE PAST WITH A VACUUM IN BAHAMIAN DEFENSE
THINKING. THE GCOB HAS TAKEN FOR GRANTED THAT THE U.S. AND
U.K. WOULD IN THEIR OWN INTERESTS DO WHATEVER WAS NECESSARY
TO PROVIDE FOR BAHAMIAN EXTERNAL DEFENSE, AND THAT OUR INTER-
ESTS IN THIS AREA COINCIDED. ONLY WITH THE RECENT TRIPARTITE
BASE TALKS HAS BAHAMIAN DEFENSE THINKING BEGUN TO DEVELOP AND
IT IS STILL IN A FORMATIVE STATE.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 NASSAU 00998 01 OF 02 241730Z

B. IN THE EMBASSY'S VIEWS, THE FOLLOWING ARE THE VARIOUS

"THREATS", OR BETTER STATED FOR BAHAMIAN CONSUMPTION "TASKS" OR "MISSIONS" WHICH GCOB SECURITY FORCES MUST BE PREPARED TO DEAL WITH. IT WILL BE INTERESTING TO COMPARE THIS WITH THE STATEMENT WE GET FROM THE GOBI -- PARA 2(H), REF B.

(1) GENERAL. AS STATED IN ITS GREEN PAPERS ON INDEPENDENCE (#102), THE GCOB BELIEVES THAT "AN ACT OF AGGRESSION AGAINST THE BAHAMAS APPEARS MOST UNLIKELY, BUT IF IT SHOULD OCCUR, WE WOULD NOT FIND OURSELVES ALONE. GEOGRAPHICALLY, THE BAHAMAS ARE STRATEGICALLY IMPORTANT TO THE SECURITY OF NORTH AMERICA -- IN ITSELF A DETERRENT TO HOSTILE MOVES BY A THIRD PARTY." THIS WAS TEMPERED SOMEWHAT IN THE SUBSEQUENT WHITE PAPER (#81), BUT THE BASIC THEME REMAINED: THE GCOB DOES NOT FEEL THREATENED EXTERNALLY.

(2) CUBA. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THE EMBASSY IS AWARE OF THAT THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT HAS AGGRESSIVE OR SUBVERSIVE DESIGNS AGAINST THE BAHAMAS. IN FACT, WE HAVE REPORTED A UK EMBASSY HAVANA ASSESSMENT THAT THE CUBANS REGARD BRITISH WITHDRAWAL FROM THE BAHAMAS AS A DESTABILIZING ELEMENT. THE CUBANS HAVE MADE OVERTURES TO THE GCOB FOR DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS.

PRIME MINISTER PINDLING WAS DISTURBED WHEN THE CUBAN NAVY SEIZED THE JOHNNY EXPRESS IN JANUARY 1972 IN OR NEAR BAHAMIAN WATERS OFF INAGUA, BUT THE GCOB PUBLIC POSITION WAS ONE OF OBVIOUS RELIEF THAT THE INCIDENT TOOK PLACE IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS AND THEY OPERATED ON THE ASSUMPTION(A CORRECT ONE) THAT THE U.S. NAVY WOULD TAKE WHATEVER STEPS WERE NECESSARY. IT IS QUESTIONABLE WHETHER THE GCOB EVER BECAME AWARE OF THE PRESENCE OF ARMED CUBAN NAVAL VESSELS OFF ANDROS FOLLOWING THE ATTACK ON CUBAN FISHERMEN IN OCTOBER 1972. ONCE AGAIN, THEY NOTED WITH RELIEF THAT THIS INCIDENT TOOK PLACE OUTSIDE BAHAMIAN TERRITORIAL WATERS AND SO REQUIRED NO GCOB RESPONSE. THERE IS, OF COURSE, AN INCONSISTENCY BETWEEN THE GCOB ASSUMPTIONS THAT THE U.S. WILL HANDLE CUBAN THREATS OF THIS TYPE AND ITS ESPOUSAL OF THE ARCHIPELAGO THEORY, WHICH WOULD GREATLY ENLARGE ITS OWN AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY. THE REQUEST FOR SECURITY EQUIPMENT IS ONE MEANS OF SEEKING TO BRIDGE THIS GAP, BUT IT SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED THAT THIS IS GROUNDED MORE IN REASONS OF NATIONAL PRIDE THAN IN ANY WELL THOUGHT-SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 NASSAU 00998 01 OF 02 241730Z

OUT SECURITY RATIONALE. THE BAHAMAS WOULD BE VERY LOATH TO BECOME ENGAGED IN A CONFRONTATION WITH THE CUBANS.

ANTI-CUBAN MILITANT GROUPS OPERATING OUT OF FLORIDA IN THE BAHAMAS ARE ANOTHER STORY. WE AND THE BAHAMIANS ARE AWARE THAT THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT SEEKS TO CONDUCT INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES IN THE BAHAMAS AGAINST THIS THREAT. HERE AGAIN, THE GCOB RELIES ON OUR INTELLIGENCE IN FLORIDA AND OUR COAST GUARD

PATROLS TO PREVENT THIS ACTIVITY. HOWEVER, DESPITE THIS, THERE HAVE BEEN ATTACKS BY MILITANTS AGAINST CUBAN FISHERMEN IN THE BAHAMAS AREA OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS. THIS IS A THREAT FROM THE UNITED STATES AGAINST WHICH THE GCOB WILL PROBABLY WANT TO DEPLOY ITS ENHANCED SECURITY FORCES IN ORDER TO REDUCE ITS DEPENDENCE ON US.

(3) SMUGGLING. THE GCOB WILL SEEK TO BEEF UP THE CAPABILITY OF ITS OWN FORCES TO PREVENT SMUGGLING OF ILLEGAL ALIENS (MAILY HAITIANS) AND DRUGS, PARTICULARLY IN AND THROUGH THE OUT-ISLANDS. IN THE NARCOTICS FIELD THERE IS CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN BAHAMIAN AND U.S. ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES AND WE ARE PROVIDING LIMITED TRAINING IN THIS AREA.

(4) AIR SEA RESCUE. THIS FUNCTION IS PRESENTLY PERFORMED BY A VOLUNTEER GROUP OF BAHAMIAN YACHTSMEN AND FLYERS -- BAHAMAS AIR-SEA RESCUE ASSOCIATION (BASRA). IT RECEIVES A MODEST GOVERNMENT SUBSIDY (\$5,000 PER YEAR) AND PERFORMS A MAJORITY OF THE RESCUES IN THE ISLANDS. HOWEVER, THE U.S. COAST GUARD ALSO PLAYS A VERY IMPORTANT ROLE BECAUSE IT HANDLES THE MORE DIFFICULT CASES THAT REQUIRE PROTRACTED SEARCHES, LARGER VESSELS, HEAVY AIRCRAFT, ETC. THIS SERVICE IS GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGED, BUT ALSO PRETTY MUCH TAKEN FOR GRANTED BY THE GCOB AS BEING IN OUR OWN INTEREST BECAUSE THERE ARE SO MANY AMERICAN YACHTSMEN AND FLYERS IN THE BAHAMAS. THE FOUR BAHAMAS POLICE PATROL CRAFT HAVE NOT, TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, ENGAGED IN SAR ACTIVITIES.

SPEAR

SECRET

NNN

SECRET

PAGE 01 NASSAU 00998 02 OF 02 241749Z

41

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 PM-03 DODE-00 L-02

EUR-10 IO-03 CG-00 TRSE-00 DEAE-00 SCA-01 SCS-01 SY-02

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 VO-01 RSR-01 H-01 COA-01

/072 W

----- 041509

R 241439Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4438

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 NASSAU 998

LIMDIS

(5) INTERNAL SECURITY. THE ROYAL BAHAMAS POLICE FORCE IS CAPABLE OF PROVIDING REASONABLY ADEQUATE PUBLIC SAFETY ON A DAY-TO-DAY BASIS. ITS INTERNAL SECURITY CAPACITY AGAINST ORGANIZED THREATS, HOWEVER, IS QUITE LIMITED. THE ABACO SECESSIONIST MOVEMENT, FOR INSTANCE, MIGHT HAVE CHALLENGED THIS CAPACITY SEVERELY, BUT SEEMS (AT THIS STATE AT LEAST) TO HAVE DISSIPATED. BECAUSE OF THE SCATTERED NATURE OF THE ISLANDS AND THEIR POPULATION, THREATS OF INSURRECTION AND DISORDER ARE LIMITED EXCEPT IN NEW PROVIDENCE AND GRAND BAHAMA, WHERE POLICE FORCES ARE CONCENTRATED. (THE POLICE HAVE BEEN RECEIVING RIOT TRAINING AT THE NEW POLICE SCHOOL.) FURTHER ECONOMIC DECLINE MIGHT LEAD TO AN INTERNAL SECURITY THREAT IF IT CONTINUED FOR 2-3 YEARS. THIS IS AN AREA WHERE WE HAVE AN INTEREST IN AN ADEQUATE BAHAMIAN CAPABILITY TO AVOID PRESURE FOR U.S. INTERVENTION IF THE SITUATION GOT OUT OF HAND. A REVOLT OF THE SECURITY FORCES AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT A LA TRINIDAD SEEMS UNLIKELY IN THE PRESENTLY FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

(6) FISHERIES. THIS IS THE MAJOR SOURCE OF THE SENSITIVITY IN OUR DEALINGS WITH BAHAMIAN SECURITY FORCES BECAUSE IN THIS AREA THE U.S. PRESENTS THE PERCEIVED THREAT TO BAHAMIAN INTERESTS. THE GCOB IS DETERMINED TO RESERVE ITS FISHERIES
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 NASSAU 00998 02 OF 02 241749Z

RESOURCES FOR BAHAMIANS AGAINST WHAT IT REGARDS AS THE ENCROACHMENTS OF U.S.- BASED CUBAN-AMERICAN FISHERMEN AND TO THIS END (AMONG OTHERS) IS ADVANCING ITS ARCHIPELAGO THEORY, WHICH WE ARE UNABLE TO ACCEPT. THREE YEARS OF NEGOTIATING EFFORT HAVE NOT BROUGHT RESOLUTION OF THIS DISPUTE, WHICH HAS BEEN MARKED BY A SERIES OF CLASHES AND INCIDENTS. THE DEPARTMENT IS AWARE OF SENSITIVITIES IN THE CONGRESS AND IN FLORIDA ON THIS SCORE. IT IS QUITE CLEAR THAT ANY FOREIGN VESSELS OR AIRCRAFT PROVIDED THE GCOB WILL PROBABLY BE USED AGAINST AMERICAN FISHERMEN.

THIS SITUATION HAS PLACED THE USCG IN THE AWKWARD POSITION OF COOPERATING WITH BAHAMIAN AGENCIES ON THE ONE HAND, WHILE PROTECTING U.S. INTERESTS AGAINST BAHAMIAN ACTIONS ON THE OTHER, AND THIS HAS LED TO GCOB SUSPICIONS ABOUT OUR HELP. FOR INSTANCE, AT ONE TIME THE POLICE SOUGHT OUR ASSISTANCE IN DIESEL MAINTENANCE TRAINING FOR THEIR MARINE DIVISION PERSONNEL AND THIS WAS ARRANGED THROUGH THE COAST GUARD. HOWEVER, THE PROJECT WAS EVIDENTLY VETOED AT POLITICAL LEVELS AND CAME TO NOUGHT. EFFORTS TO DEFUSE THE FISHERIES DISPUTE THROUGH

JOINT PATROLS HAVE MET WITH SIMILAR REJECTION.

2. THESE THEN, ARE BAHAMIAN SECURITY INTERESTS AND THE SENSITIVITIES RELATING TO THEM WHICH THE SECURITY SURVEY TEAM MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT. IT SHOULD PROVE A CHALLENGING ASSIGNMENT.
SPEAR

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 JUL 1973
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973NASSAU00998
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS SPEAR
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: NASSAU
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730714/aaaaakdx.tel
Line Count: 230
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 73 (A) STATE 133669; (B) STATE 13524, 6; (C) NASSAU 976
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 DEC 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26-Dec-2001 by martinml>; APPROVED <05-Feb-2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SECURITY SURVEY TEAM
TAGS: MILI, PINS, BF, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005